

to my friend the majority leader, I am going to withdraw my reservation. But I do say this. I want everyone to hear, including the senior Senator from West Virginia. If we don't get a change in the process by next year I am going to object to everything. This is a ridiculous process. I don't think it is good for the system and I hope we change it.

Mr. LOTT. I agree and I appreciate the Senator's comment on that. I have been thinking that for several years. I remember one day here we had, what, 39 votes and set a record, a historical record Senator BYRD told us. It is just not a good process.

We are committed to coming up, by September 8, within the next couple of months, with a way to change the process. In fact, Senator BYRD has some good ideas. But I just want to make sure that we have thought it through and we don't start and change it without thinking about unintended consequences. I don't believe anybody intended 10 years ago, when reconciliation was set up, that it would lead to this type of voting process. We are committed on both sides, the leadership and our senior Members, to coming up with a better process. We are going to do that. We certainly would like the input of the Senator from Nevada, too.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object?

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I say to the majority leader, I did not hear my name listed on that list of amendments, it is the Allard-4Abraham-Brownback amendment.

Mr. DOMENICI. We have Senator BROWNBACK. Do you have a separate one from Senator BROWNBACK?

Mr. ALLARD. It's under my name actually, Allard-Brownback; Senator ABRAHAM is a cosponsor.

Mr. LOTT. It's ALLARD-BROWNBACK. OK. We got that.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. For purposes of clarification, let me first say I subscribe to what the majority leader is attempting to do here. We hope that we can accommodate the largest number of Senators with this process. I think there are some questions, however, about what happens tomorrow morning beginning with what time we vote. I think the majority leader has now indicated 9 o'clock.

Mr. LOTT. Yes, 9 o'clock, so we will start earlier and we will start voting—we would have the brief explanation and we would start voting immediately after that. We would then vote one after the other until we completed the process.

Mr. DASCHLE. The second question has to do with the request made by the distinguished Senator from New Mexico. As I understand it, what he is attempting to do is sequence a series of amendments. I guess the question would be, at what point tomorrow does that sequencing begin?

Mr. DOMENICI. I think that's up to the floor manager as he sequences over the evening. He'll go over all the amendments and I assume he'll sequence the way we did and put the whole list together. We are not seeking any special preference in that list.

Mr. DASCHLE. It doesn't preclude any other Senator from offering amendments?

Mr. LOTT. Not at all. It would not preclude other Senators from offering amendments. I want to say to the Senator—

Mr. DASCHLE. The question would be—I'm sorry, if I can just interject? If there was an amendment on one of the amendments offered, would the sequencing preclude an amendment to one of the amendments?

Mr. DOMENICI. I did not make that request.

Mr. DASCHLE. I ask consent that be considered. I don't think that would matter, but I think we need to protect Senators in that regard.

Mr. DOMENICI. If a Senator wants an up-or-down vote on his process I would not object to that request.

Mr. LOTT. I have not had a chance to get into the specifics of each one of these amendments, but I hope we could pursue the possibility of not going through the long list of process amendments. At least half of these are on our side of the aisle. So I hope we could find another time, another day, another way to do these process amendments. I will certainly be working on that later on tonight and in the morning.

Since we have the first 3 votes already lined up that would give us time to do some work on exactly whether or not this is essential. I will work with Senator DASCHLE on that.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, there are points of order not waived on any of these. The points of order—if people want to make them you have to get 60 votes and everybody knows that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, this is not an objection. I am not going to object. But just the question, if I could ask it. My understanding is—I mean, there are a number of us—all of us would like to finish. Some of us have been waiting a long time, many, to have amendments and to discuss them and I don't think we want to prolong the matter. My understanding is as opposed to the beginning of the week, we don't actually have to lay the amendment down tonight in order to have that amendment up tomorrow; am I correct? My second question is, wouldn't it be a little bit more expeditious if in fact the amendment could be laid down so we don't have to go through that process at all tomorrow morning with the requirement if they are not laid down tonight they would be out of order?

Mr. LOTT. We have discussed that back and forth. We tried to again, in a

bipartisan way, figure the best way to deal with this, the fairest way, and also the way that would hopefully not lead to the largest number of amendments. We really think that we may actually wind up having fewer amendments finally voted on tomorrow by doing it this way. We tried it the other way. Bear with us as we try it this way.

Again I urge, unless you just really feel you have to have a vote on your amendment tomorrow I urge you, and I will be saying it on this side—but but if you feel strongly, you can talk about it tonight and offer your amendment tomorrow.

Mr. DODD. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. I inquire of our leader or our friend from New Mexico, is it necessary the process amendments be considered as part of this budget agreement, or would it not be better to deal with that as a side issue and deal with the amendments that bear directly on the tax bill and then bring up the process amendments on a separate occasion? Is there reason that has to be a part of this, I inquire of the leader or distinguished Senator from New Mexico?

Mr. DOMENICI. I could have offered a process amendment that I think is needed and other Senators think are needed. I could have offered it on the first bill that went through here, the reconciliation bill. I chose to wait for this bill. It is just as in order on this bill and just as subject to a point of order on this bill as on the other bill, but there is no other reconciliation bill coming down the field.

Mr. DODD. I understand. If my colleague will yield, I understand this. Time is running out. If we don't debate it this evening or during morning business, tomorrow we will be limited to a 1-minute explanation of process amendments that have to do with the budget process that I think are rather significant.

I am concerned that something as profound as dealing with the budget process is left to seconds to debate them, and unnecessarily so. I raise the issue of whether we ought to set that for a separate time, rather than deal with this?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, if I can respond again, I share a lot of the Senator's feelings. We will work to see if there is some way we can get an agreement on these process amendments to limit the number or to find another time and opportunity for them to be offered.

I remind you that yesterday, one unanimous consent agreement that we worked out took nine amendments off the board in one swoop, and we agreed to something that was passed by voice vote. I am not sure we can do that here. Part of what we need is a little time to work with what we have left.

Mr. DODD. I understand.

Mrs. BOXER. Reserving the right to object, and I shall not object, I have a